13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

In a recent note, Mr. K. Kannan Nāyar writes *: "Almost every Nāyar officer in Government employ, when applying for leave on account of the kettukalliānam of his daughter or niece, states in his application that he has to attend to the 'marriage' of the girl. The ceremony is generally mentioned as marriage even in the letters of invitation sent by Nāyar gentlemen in these days. . . . This ceremony is not intended even for the betrothal of the girl to a particular man, but is one instituted under Brāhman influence as an important kriya (sacrament) antecedent to marriage, and intended, as the popular saying indicates, for dubbing the girl with the status of Amma, a woman fit to be married. The saying is Tāli-kettiu Amma āyi, which means a woman has become an Amma when her tali-tying ceremony is over."

In summing up the evidence collected by him, Mr. L. Moore states † that it seems to prove beyond all reasonable doubt that "from the sixteenth century at all events, and up to the early portion of the nineteenth century, the relations between the sexes in families governed by marumakkattayam were of as loose a description as it is possible to imagine. The tāli-kettu kalyānam, introduced by the Brāhmans, brought about no improvement, and indeed in all probability made matters much worse by giving a quasi-religious sanction to a fictitious marriage, which bears an unpleasant resemblance to the sham marriage ceremonies performed among certain inferior castes elsewhere as a cloak for prostitution. As years passed, some time about the opening of the nineteenth century, the Kērala Mahatmyam and Keralolpathi were concocted, probably by Nambūdris, and false and pernicious doctrines as to the obligations laid on the

* Malabar Quart. Review, VII, 3, 1908. † *Op. cit.*

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

342 From the portico, you go direct into a big hall in the middle of which is a big yard paved with granite; this yard is exposed to the sky. On one side of the hall—right or left—are situated two or three rooms, from one of which you are taken to upstairs rooms which are also connected with the portico. On the portico side of the hall are the kitchen, bath-room, and a few more rooms which are utilized for various purposes. In another place of the compound is an outhouse in which Brahmans are asked to perform worship.* Near this house is a tank and a well. The house itself possesses a well near it for the exclusive use of the inmates.

But educated Nayars now-a-days build their houses on different plans.

361 *Preliminary.*—Watakanchery is a Government division, rather than a true village, being marked out merely for convenience of revenue assessment. It stretches from east to west a distance of nearly four miles along the foot of a hill. A water-course which runs from east to west forms the northern boundary; the maximum distance from north to south is nearly a mile and a half. The whole area is 3,692·64 acres (nearly 5½ square miles). It is an area containing a few groups of houses intersected by paddy fields and "parambas," i.e., land on which paddy cultivation is not undertaken.

Watakanchery proper, or the town of Watakanchery, as it is called in the village accounts, is at the easternmost boundary of the Government village area and is the headquarters of the taluk containing all the public offices. Two tracts of land, one inhabited by Mappillas (Muhammadans) and another by Syrian Christians (locally known as Nasranees, i.e., Nazarenes) are included in the "town" of Watakanchery from the contiguous areas of the adjoining Government villages on the north and south respectively. Its area is 1½ square miles.

The Taluk of Talapilli contains 74 such "villages" divided solely for revenue purposes. In the "town" Brahmans live in great numbers, while the lower castes occupy the rest of the village area. This block I shall designate Watakanchery (T) and the whole area Watakanchery (V) in the following.

162 *Population.*—Watakanchery (T) has about 2,000 inhabitants;
●[779] Watakanchery (V) about 4,000. Watakanchery (T) contains within
564 its limits three religions—Hindus in the centre and Mappillas (Muhammadans) and Christians to the north and south, respectively. Among the Hindus the Brahmans form the majority in the "town," while there are a few "vocational" castes such as barbers, goldsmiths, etc., and a few Nayars. Though the term "castes" is in strictness to be applied to Hindus alone the Mappillas and Christians are regarded as two other castes. The Mappillas and the Christians cannot touch the Hindu caste-people without polluting them, while there are castes within the Hindu fold itself, such as carpenters, goldsmiths, masons, Cherumas (vide below), Eluvas, etc., who are
[113] kept at a distance of a specified number of feet by the higher castes. There is a full and interesting study of the tribes and castes in Mr. L. K. Anandakrishna Iyer's "Cochin Tribes and Castes." The Hindus however form the majority.

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[778] *[In Nayar houses, I am informed by Mr. L. K. Anandakrishna Iyer, this shrine is sacred to the cobra, to whom worship must be given by a Nambudri brahman, as otherwise the Nayars are bitten. This belief may be the cause of the subjection imposed on Nayars by Nambudris, particularly in relation to Nayar women.—Ed.]

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

Malabar, in which patrilineal and matrilineal castes who are similar in their kinship customs are described, and again we find that other sections of the same casts are patrilineal or matrilineal in different localities. In parts of Ceylon I would hear villagers suggest that sons took their "names" from their father and daughters from their mother, a reflection not so much of descent (for these ideas were not applied in practice) but of the difference between the sexes.

Even the Muslims are not very different. On the Malabar coast the diversity of origins in the Muslim community can be easily traced in the complex body of customs, appellations, different signs, and practice whereby subgroups appear to distinguish one another. Gough (1961) has discussed some features of the matrilineal Muslims (Mapilla); D'Souza (1959) in a carefully documented article observes that, leaving aside a special group who call themselves *Arabi* and attempt to follow traditional Islam, Muslims in general conform to the patterns of kinship usual in Malabar and are divided into patrilineal and matrilineal *taravads* (p. 492). Moreover, in the case of patrilineal *taravads*, several of them again come together to form an *endogamous* group; hence in any locality there are several endogamous Moplah groups (p. 493). He goes on to make the following observation (p. 498):

> In the coastal North Malabar, as one proceeds southwards to places like Quilandy and Badagara, the mother right social organization undergoes a change. The change becomes quite distinct in the coastal region of South Malabar. The change in mother right traits . . . may be primarily attributed to the fact that whereas in North Malabar the ancestral property is inherited exclusively in the female line, in the south it is inherited . . . in the male line. But the social organization is essentially mother right and the modifications are such as suit the change in the principle of inheritance.

It is not merely this shifting picture of descent and inheritance which strikes one as being entirely in line with the material collected by Iyer (1909, 1912, 1937) in all kinds of small caste groups, for D'Souza (1959, p. 502) firmly establishes that the Muslim Mapilla also follow the Nambudiri–Nayar model of hypergamy with considerable dedication: "For instance, the Thangal males can marry women from any other groups of Moplahs [Mapilla] but Thangal women cannot marry any man other than a Thangal. An Arabi male can marry any [Mapilla] woman other than a Thangal, but the Arabi woman can marry, besides an Arabi male, only a Thangal male, and so on."

There is little doubt that the marriage customs recorded by D'Souza bear a close similarity to those recorded for the Moors of Ceylon earlier in this volume. D'Souza's evidence on names is not directed to the question of hypergamy and prestige, but it does appear that names